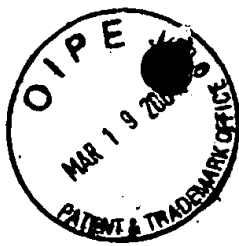


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PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : Patel, et al.  
Appl. No. : 10/007,003  
Filed : November 9, 2001  
For : SYSTEMS AND METHODS  
FOR PROVIDING A  
DISTRIBUTED FILE SYSTEM  
UTILIZING METADATA TO  
TRACK INFORMATION  
ABOUT DATA STORED  
THROUGHOUT SYSTEM

Examiner : Susan Y. Chen

) Group Art Unit 2171

) I hereby certify that this correspondence and all  
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) Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C.  
) 20231, on

) March 17, 2004

) (Date)

) *Amy Christensen*  
) Amy C. Christensen, Reg. No. 52,742

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RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION MAILED DECEMBER 18, 2003

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

The following amendments and remarks are responsive to the rejections set forth by the Examiner in the Office Action mailed December 18, 2003.

**I. CLEAN VERSION OF THE AMENDED CLAIMS**

Listed below are the changes made to Claims 1 and 13-16, in which the deletions to the amended claims are bracketed and the insertions are underlined. Claims 2-12 and 17-20 remain as previously pending. Claims 21-42 are cancelled. Claims 43-58 are newly added claims.

Please amend the following claims as follows:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A distributed file system communicating with a plurality of intelligent storage devices, wherein the distributed file system is configured to store and manage data and metadata about files and directories stored on the distributed file system, wherein the data of at least one of the files or directories stored on the distributed file system span at least two of the intelligent storage devices.